Anatomy of Assessment

Video and Resource Memo (Group)

Faculty: Business School
Department: Management
Module name: Organisational Behaviour (compulsory)
Degree: MSc Management
Level: Postgraduate
Format: Video and Resource Memo on an Article from current Business Publication (Group Assignment)
Approximate number of students: 400 (4 streams of approx. 100)
Delivery mode: Video, and Typed Resource Memo
Duration: 5 minute video; Resource Memo no longer than 1 page A4, one sided, 1.2-spacing, Arial font, 12 pt size; Students have 4 weeks to work on the video and resource memo; this is a 10 lecture module; 2 lectures per week
Weighting and credit: 30%
Module ECTS: 5
Module type: Compulsory

Assessment overview

This is a group assignment, where students present a case analysis, in a 5-minute long video and a 1-page memo format, on an article from a current business publication. The programme team assigns syndicate groups formed of approximately 5-6 students each. The group is to choose a recent article from a business publication such as The Economist, or The Financial Times, etc. on an organisation of their choice. The students then choose a specific organisational behaviour topic they would like to relate to their organisation of choice to, as chosen from the article. These specific topics could be, for example, motivation, personality and individual differences, decision making, etc. The video should be self-explanatory, but the memo provides background. All group members are to play an active part in the video, either through physical presence, or in voice-over.

Design decisions

Rationale for the assessment

The assessment is very broad and very flexible. Students are to submit the article and topic to the lecturer prior to beginning work on the video and memo in a shared online excel spreadsheet. The module runs over 5 weeks; 2 lectures per week. The assessment is discussed on day 1 of the module and is laid out in the syllabus. The selection of article and topic are due on the day of the third session. The lecturer then very quickly provides approval (or not) of the group's choice (within a day or so). The video and memo is due one day before the 10th and final session. Watch this video on giving students choice.

The principle of allowing choice in assessment is a good one for several reasons: it makes for a more student-centred approach to assessment; it is more inclusive by empowering students to work on topics of importance to them; and it is fosters independence. A caveat is that the extent of the choice needs to be considered carefully depending on the level of the students. If students have less insight into the subject/discipline, or are at an earlier stage in their learning, choice may feel overwhelming. In this case, it can be useful to provide a level of scaffolding, for example by giving a few options (e.g. giving a selection of articles for students to choose from), or giving some examples of the sorts of choices students have made in previous years. Having a brief check and approval from the teacher is also useful, as this can help to make students feel secure in their choice and also enables the teacher to check that students will be able to meet the ILOs with their selected material.

The report is to include an analysis of the organisational behaviour topic, with respect to the specific journal article/ company discussed in the article. The groups prepare the video and memo simultaneously. The assessment runs over the entire length of the course (5 weeks; 2 lectures per week). The video includes an analysis of the issue, and recommendations made from concepts included in course readings and lectures. The article is to be included as an Appendix to the report. The one page memo is generally a summary of the video. The video should be self-explanatory, but the memo provides background. All group members are to play an active part in the video, either through physical presence, or in

Insights colour key

Educational Developer

Inclusivity

Learning Designer

Registry

Careers

Interviewee: Esther Canonico
Role: Module Lecturer
Author: Christa Hansen

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voice-over.

In the last lecture of the course, a few of the groups' videos are chosen to be shown in class, typically 3-4 videos. The lecturer attempts to choose a broad range of topics and styles for the videos presented so those shown in the final class are varied. For example, although a free range of style is encouraged, the `news presenter' type of format is common. "I am an expert in leadership," etc. Open discussion by the whole class on each of the videos is encouraged, typically running for 5-10 minutes per video. Students find this to be very fun as it is the last class, and the pressure of submission is removed.

It was noted by students approximately 60 hours of group time were spent on the assessment, and 10 hours of individual time.

Having many fast-paced activities introducing an element of pressure given the short duration of the module, suited for the nature of the cohort, the degree and the nature of the industry. While this is authentic, when choosing an assessment diet for the course it is important to consider the ECTS value. A 5 ECTS course requires 125 hours of effort. It is important to reflect whether the proposed number of assessments is appropriate for the amount of effort indicated by ECTS, especially with group work involved that can take a lot of student time and effort.

The assessment is very current, as students are encouraged to use any present-day news in the market from business publications. This requires students to do research and to relate course content to real life case studies of their own choosing. The student understanding of the course content is enhanced, as well as their understanding of the relevance to businesses. The students develop an important skill of producing concise deliverables, from a lot of research, and presenting their analysis in a clear structured final output. Students also enhance their team working skills. All these skills are relevant for life after graduation and for an understanding of Organisational Behaviour itself.

Using a multimedia output, the video, encourages student creativity as there is freedom in the format.

At interviews for some companies such as Ford potential candidates are often asked about a recent article they read and are asked to discuss how what they read would influence the future. They are asked to analyse what is happening now and what it means going forward. Hence delivering a concise overview of what they learnt, similar to what this assessment is trying to do, could be one of interview tasks they will be asked to perform when applying for jobs.

Historically, some students have presented news shows, animations, or Powerpoints with voice over. Additionally, videos are easy to share in class with all students, allowing for students to learn from other case studies and ask questions of their peers. The memo gives the opportunity to students to showcase their references and supportive information and research, providing more academic supporting materials alongside the video

One potential downside of choosing a video to showcase, however, is that students might feel like their work wasn't very good if their video is not chosen to be showcased. Alternative approaches could be: the teacher and students choose a few videos together, either at random or based on the title/ summary of each video; or all videos could be uploaded to a platform and incorporate a peer review element, where students are tasked with peer reviewing one (or a small number) of videos, which are then discussed/critiqued/praised in the final session.

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It's common in a business workplace to be asked to summarise a longer document in let's say three bullet points so this assessment is aligned with real life practice. It's useful to ensure that students know what audience their outputs (memo, video) are aimed at so they can tailor the report according to the readers needs and potential expectations.

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presentation. Again, the output is similar to what would happen in many businesses where summary presentations are used to explain an idea but senior management have access to more detailed analysis in note format behind the presentation.

Video design requirements
Students were asked to produce a five-minute video discussing the organisation, the organisational behavioural issue, and the connection between the two. They were required to ensure that all group members had a part to play in the video, either a voice over or on camera. There were no restrictions placed on what format the video could take, with the aim of giving students' creative freedom. Videos were uploaded to the course Insendi page (the Business School virtual learning hub).

When it comes to allowing students an option to upload a link or a file it is useful to consider where such a link would sit. The platform allows both types of uploads but it is important to be mindful of the GDPR issues around link uploads. It might be safer to allow a low quality direct upload.

Memo design
The memo is a written report to complement the video. Its purpose is to provide more analytical background information on the connection between the business and the Organisational Behaviour, allowing the video to be less formal. The students were told to see the video as something that could be presented to staff in an organisation, and the memo would be used by a manager when explaining the video to staff. The memo was limited to one A4 page in length (one-sided, 1.2 spacing and 12 point Arial Font), plus the article on which the analysis was based added as an appendix.

Fit with other assessments and the programme/ module
Organisational Behaviour is a Core module of the MSc Management, delivered over a five-week period in the autumn term. The video and memo assessment sits with an additional 10% course participation grade, and the main course assessment, an individual `best-self' assessment (worth 20%) and `practice plan' (40%).

The best-self exercise requires self-reflection and feedback from others. Students are asked to write up a description of themselves which weaves together the themes of stories gathered from 3 to 4 people who know them well. Students are asked to be explicit about how these qualities are relevant to their managerial skills. The stories received are included as an Appendix to the deliverable. The impact on practice plan is an assignment where students apply relevant material from the module to a work situation. Students should aim to answer the following:

- What is the professional role that you would like in the near future? Provide context (e.g., industry, organisation, culture).
- What capabilities/ skills do you already have that are relevant to this role? How will you build on these?
- What are your gaps in regard to the capabilities that you could need in

your future role?
- Prepare a personal action plan that covers how you could prepare for this role.

The format of the individual assignment is PowerPoint slides, a maximum of 10 slides; appendices and list of references are not included in the maximum number of slides.

The lecturer believes teaching students to think about how they see themselves managing teams is a nice form of a reflection on the video and memo assessment, so the assessments do tie together, and act as an intervention on future individual research.

Sometimes there are pop quizzes included in the course, even with silly questions (e.g. how many children does the lecturer have) to encourage course engagement and entertainment, and participation.

The video and memo assessment prepared students well for other assessments in the module. They needed to have a deep understanding of the course material on the topic they were considering and applying to a particular organisation which gave them a very solid grounding for other assessments on that material (exam and related individual reflection questions).

The task of producing a video and writing a concise research memo is like outputs in other modules in the programme and therefore helps students be ready for these later in the programme.

As noted in the rationale section, the skills developed in this assessment are highly desirable to employers. In particular, the requirement to extract key information and present it concisely, in multiple formats, is something that graduate employers regularly say they look for. Group work skills are also highly relevant.

Practicalities

Preparing students for assessment

Students are assigned to groups by the programme team. In order to prepare students for this assessment, it is recommended to discuss the coursework during the first lecture, as well as the deadline for groups to submit their topic and article on a shared excel spreadsheet. Additionally, it is advisable for the lecturer to review all topics chosen, and advise students on their choice of topics, as well as related concepts from the lecture. Ideally, this is done in class, when time is given for groups to work on their topics and analysis, and then to pitch it to the lecturer. If there are joint lecturers on the module, it is important to be consistent in approvals for the projects, so it is suggests perhaps only one individual approves the topics even if there is a team working together.

Additionally, it is advisable for the lecturer to set aside some amount of

When introducing group work some consideration needs to be given to how students with specific learning needs can be successfully participating in group interactions. All students involved should benefit from inclusive practice this means that inclusivity considerations can be embedded within standard practice around preparing students for group work. This can be done through discussion around the allocation of roles and better understanding how others, including those with specific learning needs such as dyslexia, autism, dyspraxia etc learn and communicate. Individuals should be mindful of that and think about the delegation of individual tasks that are appropriate to what individuals can do. Therefore part of preparation for group work is considering how others can be mindful and empathetic towards other group members.

Scaffolding in this way is important, especially as this might be a different (and potentially daunting) type of assessment for some students. Depending on how the module is staffed (i.e. if it is team taught or if other staff are available at certain points), it might be useful to have more than one check-in point, this gives students more than one opportunity for formative feedback. It's also important to make time for students to form their groups and to discuss how to work in a team. As mentioned elsewhere, it can be a useful to incorporate a small task into the assessment, whereby students either reflect on how their group worked together and/ or they produce a short document detailing how each member contributed. By making this explicit as part of the assessment, this can help to set expectations from the outset and stimulate some discussion about what constitutes a 'good' team.

Having the lecturer as the sole marker could be problematic if there is no part of the module that is assessed by a second marker or moderator. However, a key advantage of the lecturer marking an assessment is that they will have the best insight into the students' learning process, including how they worked as groups, how they developed their creative decision-making skills, etc. If other staff are available it might be preferable to have markers other than the lecturer or to have a second marker from among the staff who contributed to the module. An alternative, or additional marker, could be the students themselves, in the form of a low-weighted peer mark.

time in class to work with the students on the assessment, typically one session. The lecturer is then able to spend time with each group and answer questions, and provide guidance and advice. Currently, the lecturer sets aside time in class 2 weeks before the assessment is due – there is one session dedicated to the students working in the lecture. The lecturer gives the students an exercise in class focusing on a team process, and how they work as a team, and makes certain everyone is included – if there is any conflict, the team is able to share how the issues were resolved, etc. The lecturer circulates and gives guidance. As each team is only focusing on one topic, this is a feasible – thus the lecturer is able to give team feedback shortly before the assessment is due.

When asking students to do more creative tasks it is very important to ensure that they understand what is expected of them. This applies to establishing clear rules and expectations around group work, ensuring they understand the marking criteria so can appropriately direct their efforts and to be aware of what the requirements of the final output are.

Students are not provided with specific guidance on how to produce a video (the technology) for this module.

When it comes to deciding on whether to provide specific guidance on video assessments in terms of the technology is needed it is useful to consider if there is a level of creativity involved in the task. If the purpose of the task is for the students to be creative it is useful to give the students some freedom and not be too prescriptive with what tools to use and how. Some students prefer to have some resources to rely on because they feel uncomfortable if they have to start completely from scratch without any guidance and might feel uncomfortable not knowing. The teaching team therefore needs to weigh in the emphasis on creativity (or its lack) and the nature of the cohort.

Marking arrangements
The memo allows students to provide references and supportive information which helps in the marking process. In this specific module, the marking has been done exclusively by the lecturer. The video and memo assessment were worth 30% of the total module mark. It is noted the greatest issue is usually the students do not go into enough depth on the topic. Within the 30%, the assessment was marked as follows:

- Quality of analysis and recommendations 50%
  Does the team show depth of analysis of the topic / issues selected? Are the arguments well developed to show a good insight into the topic / issues? Are the recommendations well connected to the issues identified in the analysis?
- Research support 30%
  Are the arguments supported by relevant theoretical and/or empirical evidence? Does the work bring together relevant literature/theory to address the real-life situation?
- Clarity of structure 10%
  Is the presentation/video well organised and logically constructed?

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In a fully online environment it is generally better to provide some scaffolding for non-traditional, more creative tasks that involve technology use. Past experiences suggest that the professionals that online courses attract would rather not take a long time to explore different tools available on the market to produce the assessment. Hence having more of a baseline with some suggested choices can support those students better. This is also the case if the purpose of the programme or the assessment is not asking to explore and understand which tool to choose in which case it is better to remove the potential friction that having too much freedom with the tool can cause and redirect that focus to the content of the assessment.

The important thing is to make sure everything is constructively aligned so that what could be perceived as 'fun' is reflected in the ILOs (e.g. including elements of creativity and teamwork in ILOs) and in the learning and teaching approaches. In this way, if some students perceive this as a more fun assessment, they will still be aware of the wider context and content of the module, and how it will be assessed. Having a clear set of marking criteria, and taking a little bit of time to explain these to students, will also help to set clear expectations in the assessment. I think this was done well in this module, where there was a clear focus on content and analysis with a 50% weighting.

- Visuals and Presentation Style 10%
  Was the visual support good (visually appealing, creative? Did the team, as a whole, give a good presentation (i.e., clear and audible communication styles, professional approach)?

Online adaptations

This assessment could be run online, although it would be more difficult with the loss of in-person group meetings, and the loss of the in-person lecturer supervision session in the class time close to submission. However, the video content format is easily transferrable – people can easily watch the videos online and comment in an online course format.

When trying to build a corresponding online experience the challenge is always that the choices are constrained by the face to face perspective. What really needs to be considered is the difference in the face to face and online environments. The best starting to point is thinking about what needs to be achieved and working with a learning designer to understand how the same outcomes cane be achieved utilizing the online environment and the online tools. It's all about breaking down how different components of online environment – synchronous, asynchronous – can work together and support one another in achieving learning outcomes.

Loss of presence of the teacher can be quite a big issue in online settings. Ensuring a stronger lecturer/ teaching presence in the online course is important. This can be done through using the narrative in the first person so that it is actually the lecturers speaking throughout the learning journey, include personal elements or have a well established TA presence throughout that responds to queries.

Advantages of the assessment type

- Students connect course materials to real world example themselves, this makes the assessment more authentic and well aligned with what they might be doing in professional lives;
- Students learn how to use academic research to produce a business-focused output;
- Allows students to develop higher order knowledge by applying content to specific case that they select;
- Group working enables individuals to develop key employability skills

Limitations of the assessment type

- As video assessments may be considered a `fun' assessment by the students, there is the risk that students misalign mark expectations with the level of content they produce given the amount of effort they have put in. For example, sometimes student spend a lot of time on

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A common criticism of exemplars is that they inhibit creativity. However, particularly with less conventional assessments, exemplars can help to clarify expectations and provide some scaffolding. Other literature shows that exemplars can be useful if students are asked to engage actively rather than simply look at the exemplars, for example creating debates and discussions about grades that exemplars were awarded; asking students to grade exemplars, etc. (cf. To, Panadero & Carless 2021). Another way of using exemplars without inhibiting creativity is to delay the use of exemplars: ask students to draft their own ideas and create a plan for their assignment, including any creative elements they might wish to incorporate. Then show exemplars only after students have started to develop their own ideas in relation to the assessment brief. The exemplars can then still provide some scaffolding and help to communicate expectations, but without hampering the creative process from the start.

technicalities – for example, continually re-recording the video to perfect the sound, which has nothing to do with the content they are producing;

- This assessment can be timely for the lecturer: In reviewing topics initially, giving in-class guidance, marking, and the day before the final session, in choosing which videos to present and discuss in class. With approximately 60 groups, and 5 minute videos, this can indicate 2-3 hours of searching for the right mix to find the right range to present, since not all can be viewed in class;
- Students may be concerned about working with others they don't know in a group, but no significant issues on this were identified in this module.

Advice for implementation

- Topics must be current business/ news articles. If something is chosen that is stale, analysis will already be written about the organisational behaviour topic, and then there is a lack of originality and depth in what students are able to offer. For example, much has been written about the leadership of Elon Musk, etc. Or, for example, when Amazon bought Wholefoods, that was interesting at first because it was a culture clash, but by the second year there was too much information analysing the situation already publicly available. It is very important for the lecturer to be discriminating in the combination of articles/ organisations and topics they approve for the students to approve for this assessment;
- Do take time to have an in-class session where the lecturer is able to observe the groups; it is helpful feedback to the students before they submit their final product.;
- Cohorts of students often ask to see prior examples of videos. First, you need permission to do this from the video authors (former students). More importantly, this has proven to be a very bad idea. It limits the creativity from the current cohort significantly. Encourage creativity and confidence. Please see video on pros and cons of exemplars and strategies on how to use exemplars successfully.
- If creativity is an important part of the this assessment, having at least one ILO that explicitly mentions (and assesses) the creative approach that is encouraged;
- It is useful to give students the freedom of creating the final output but at the same time provide a little bit of resources for those who need them;
- With more creative assessments such as a video it is useful to provide a more detailed marking rubric that breaks down performance clearly so that it is clear how creativity in a video is assessed – is it the quality of the visual output and the lightning etc or is it more the creativity of the content;
- It is important to ensure that students are well prepared for the different components that contribute to the success of their performance – working in groups, creating a video, demonstrating ILOs;
- It's important to build in support for students with specific learning needs.